

My amendment simply extends whistleblower protections that are created under the bill to Federal employees who disclose information about travel, including improper use of aircraft.

Not only would this make clear to agencies that any violation of laws, rules, or regulations concerning travel or government aircraft is unacceptable, it will also ensure those who come forward to expose any wrongdoing will have appropriate protection from retaliation.

Regardless of party, those who serve the American public must be held to the highest ethical standards. Our ability to hold government officials accountable to taxpayers is a hallmark of our democracy, and we must work to uphold that principle. The resources invested to agencies to fulfill their missions of serving Americans should not be abused or frivolously flaunted for personal gain or convenience.

This is not about Republicans or Democrats. We must come together to stand up for accountability and transparency. The moment we begin treating disregard for the rules by our elected and appointed officials as partisan politics, we risk ceding the very values that make our democracy great and unique in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting my commonsense amendment on behalf of American taxpayers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Iowa is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose the motion to recommit.

This bill addresses critical flaws in how the Federal Government addresses whistleblower retaliation.

The consequences for whistleblower retaliation are very real. There is a chilling effect of whistleblower reports or unjust termination. In some cases, like that of Dr. Kirkpatrick in the Department of Veterans Affairs, the consequences are literally life and death.

We have the opportunity to send this bill to the President for a signature today and fix this now. Why wait? And at what cost to Federal employees, veterans, and taxpayers?

I support the gentleman from Maryland's effort to pass this provision which I previously cosponsored myself, but let's not let one good bill get in the way of another.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose the motion to recommit and support the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1355

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky) at 1 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.

#### MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2810, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and request a conference with the Senate thereon.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to instruct conferees at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Langevin moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2810 be instructed as follows:

(1) To disagree with subsection (c) of section 336 of the Senate amendment.

(2) To recede from section 1064 of the House bill.

(3) To disagree with section 1087 of the Senate amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Army has a surplus of pistols. The M-1911 A-1, a .45-caliber pistol—the Armed Forces standard issue sidearm for more than 50 years—was replaced in the 1980s by a newer model.

Since then the Army has accumulated stores of surplus M-1911 pistols which are housed at taxpayer expense in Alabama.

There is no national security reason to keep these pistols. The Army stopped issuing them 30 years ago, yet the Army has been prevented from disposing of them due to parochial interests tied to the Civilian Marksmanship Program, or CMP.

The CMP's proponents basically want to transfer the pistols to a private corporation so that it can sell them. Do we want this to happen? We have the opportunity in this year's NDAA to stop this transfer of tens of thousands of M-1911 A-1 pistols which constitutes a multimillion-dollar government giveaway.

It is also important to note that this would make our streets more dangerous at a time when gun violence is all too common.

The CMP was established in 1903—just to put this in historical context—following the Spanish-American War when American militiamen demonstrated distressingly poor marksmanship. At that time, our Nation needed a better trained and organized militia, and the CMP helped the government build a broader base of able citizen-soldiers.

Now, the program was an important component of our national defense back then. But today, Mr. Speaker, over a century later, we have a professional military and many rifle clubs, and the CMP is, quite frankly, no longer needed. Congress clearly understood this when it privatized the CMP in 1996.

Now, as an initial capital investment at a time when earmarks were still common, Congress provided the newly chartered corporation with a stock of rifles, ammunition, and other spare parts. The CMP could sell the surplus equipment—mostly M1 Garand rifles—in order to fund its activities until it became self-sufficient.

□ 1400

However, it was never Congress' intent to equip the CMP with handguns, or it would have provided the corporation with surplus M-1911-A1 .45-caliber pistols at that time.

Now, more than two decades later, the CMP is running out of rifles to sell. The reality is that it is in dire financial straits as, more than 20 years later, the program is still reliant on rifle sales to support its activities.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is clearly not the taxpayers' responsibility to bail out the CMP. To do so would be an unprecedented government handout at a time when earmarks have been banned for years.